



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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#OromoProtests Statement on Ongoing War in Ethiopia

On the 3rd of November 2020, Ethiopia at the command of expired Prime Minister Mr Abiy Ahmed waged war against the people of Tigray. Two weeks into the conflict, a reported almost 40,000 refugees have fled into neighbouring Sudan to escape persecution by Abiy's concoction of federal military forces, regional special forces, and Amhara militias, as he purports to be carrying out a "law and order operation" against the Tigray People's Liberation Front. Heavy civilian casualties have been reported; numbers are unconfirmed due to a widespread government-imposed telecommunications shutdown.

It is critical to highlight that the officially declared military operation is not an isolated conflict, but rather an extension of Abiy's continued state atrocities against several of Ethiopia's nations and nationalities. Abiy has been conducting an unofficial war in Oromia since shortly after he was selected to office without a federal election. The institution of military command posts across a number of Oromia zones has over the past two years led to egregious human rights violations against innocent civilians. Federal forces have been responsible for mass killings, arbitrary arrests, and gruesome torture of countless Oromo people, not to mention rampant looting and destruction of their property and land. These acts of terror are continuing to take place unabated, and telecommunications remain shut down in Oromia and Tigray, as Abiy furthers his war against the nations of Ethiopia through his attack on the Tigray region.

It must be understood that this is a widening of a larger ideological war; it is Abiy's military approach to dismantling multinational federalism, and clearing the path for his vision of centralised, hegemonic rule of Ethiopia. It is a war against the constitutional rights to self-determination, self-governance, and cultural citizenship of the nations and nationalities of Ethiopia.

There have been repeated warnings from Oromo individuals, organisations, and institutions that Abiy's transitional government would default on the democratic transition. It was warned that state persecution of Oromo people is not occurring in a vacuum and would impact Ethiopia at large. Too often, these warnings went ignored, both domestically and internationally. Now, Abiy poses a rapidly increasing risk to peace and security in not only Oromia, Tigray, and every other region in Ethiopia, but in the entire Horn of Africa.

Just as #OromoProtests strongly denounced the war on Oromia, and all forms of state violence, we categorically condemn Abiy's war on Tigray. We fear that if Abiy is not stopped, he will inflict irredeemable damage to the already marginalised nations and nationalities, the entire country, and the Horn of Africa region as a whole.

We call on the international community to compel Mr Abiy Ahmed to allow a comprehensive and meaningful national dialogue with all opposition political parties, including both armed and unarmed entities, with the goal of establishing actionable terms for political transition. This must include the release of all political prisoners.

We also reiterate our call to all nations and nationalities who are pursuing the right to self-determination in Ethiopia, to stand in solidarity with the Oromo nation.



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